

General Education Council Meeting
April 24, 2000

Members Present:

C. Shroeder-Student Rep
K. Margerison-Chair Rep
M. Brennan-Liberal Arts
M. Lord-Education
G. Rydl-Applied Arts
B. Melzer-Health Professions
C. McCall-Education
B. Brown-Liberal Arts
F. Blevens-Fine Arts and Comm
V. Luizzi-Chair Rep
T. Sanchez-Student Rep
V. Sriraman-Science
K. Moffeit-Business
T. Mandeville-Education
S. Beebe-Chair Rep

Members Absent:

J. Ross-Business
J. Oliver-Business
E. Nielsen-Fine Arts and Comm
R. Whalin-Fine Arts and Comm
C. Hawkins-Health Professions
L. Thomas-Health Professions

Guests:

Richard Dickson
Lawrence Estaville

Meeting convened at 3:37 p.m.

R. Brown asked the Council to review the agenda. He then asked if anyone had any objections to adding C. Schroeder to the agenda to discuss the issue of student voting on the Council. R. Brown asked the Council to review the corrected minutes from the March 6th and 7th meetings and the April 10th meeting. B. Brown was agreeable to the corrections.

Motion:

R. Brown asked for a motion to approve the minutes from March 6th and 27th and April 10th. M. Lord so moves. B. Melzer seconds the motion.

The Council received the subcommittees' report from their April 18th meeting.

The Subcommittee met on April 18, 2000 to discuss the remaining charges:

1. to review and recommend action upon the proposal for additional natural science perspective general education courses
2. To develop recommendations for a process to address course proposals in the future.
3. Also reviewed at that meeting were the rules of parliamentary authority governing conduct of the committee (presented in the following text, as well as the development of additional recommendations for consideration by the GEC during the next academic year (presented in the following text.

Parliamentary authority:

The Chair reviewed the parliamentary authority governing the activities of the subcommittee: (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 1990 edition*)

For handling a motion referred to a committee:

S □3: Commit or refer: This subsidiary motion is used to send a pending question to a relatively small group of selected persons so that the question may be carefully investigated and put into better condition for the assembly to consider (p165)

Reporting a committee's recommendation:

S 50: When a committee reports on a resolution or other main question which was referred to it . . . the form of the report and type of action depends on the nature of the case, including:

- Recommending adoption, or rejection or making no recommendation (p507)
- Recommending definite or indefinite postponement (p510)
- Recommending amendments (p512)
- Recommending a substitute (p 515)

S 12: The motion to substitute often provides a convenient and timesaving method for handling a poorly framed resolution or for introducing a different and better approach to the real question raised by a main motion. (p154)

Conduct of committee business:

S 49: Committees. . . operate under any applicable rules stated in the bylaws, the parliamentary authority, special rules of order and standing rules . . . (p479)

S 9: In most organizations . . . membership meetings are open to the public, but board or committee meetings are customarily held in executive session. In the latter case, members of the organization who are not members of the board or committee, and sometimes nonmembers, may be invited to attend, perhaps to give a report, but they are not entitled to attend. (Confirmation of this was provided by Bill Flye, SWT attorney)

Motion:

The subcommittee recommends rejecting GEO 2410: Physical Environment as an additional SWT Natural Science Perspective to be included in the SWT General Education Core Curriculum listing at this time.

Support Statement: Following a thorough review of the materials provided by the department for the subcommittee to review, including the textbook and lab manual, the subcommittee could not support this course as an additional general education course at this time for the following reasons:

1. although the laboratory activities use existing data to complete the activities there is minimal evidence that use of instrumentation for collecting and analyzing data for use in the laboratory exercises exists in the current structure of the laboratory activities
2. there were few “Laws of Nature” incorporated into the course and it could not be determined what laws could be further developed from the study of this course

Although a similar course is available for a general education course at several other Texas institutions, a review of the requirements of those institutions revealed that they required a student completing such a course to fulfill a general education requirement to also have completed either a greater number of math credits than required at SWT or mandated the additional science general education course be from biology, chemistry or physics to assure the scientific approach has been studied. These parameters do not currently exist at SWT. The current course also appears more appropriate for the entry level for the major than to meet a general education requirement.

It is anticipated that the department could revise the existing course content, including laboratory data collection activities, to meet the natural science perspective and resubmit the revised course for consideration as a general education course.

Discussion:

B. Brown asked the subcommittee if they read the Geography course proposals the same as they read the Anthropology and Physic course proposals. He also asked if the same criteria for consideration were maintained for the Geography, Anthropology and Physic course proposals. He wanted to be certain the subcommittee had thoroughly read through the proposal and supporting information. He thinks there is no doubt the proposed Geography courses meet the natural science perspective. He just wanted to be certain the Geography courses are being evaluated the same as the Anthropology and Physic courses.

B. Melzer told the Council that one of the criteria for meeting the natural science perspective is to create new data like Chemistry and Physics experiments require of the students and not using existing data. She told the Council that when the subcommittee evaluated the Astronomy courses they found evidence of data collection through the lab manual and the instruments used for collecting data.

K. Margerison asked B. Brown how they collect data in the lab? B. Brown told the Council to look at #9 on pages 6 and 7 of the proposal. The students are required to collect and gather atmospheric moisture and evaluate it. K. Margerison asked B. Brown for more examples. B. Brown told the Council the students also generate data on precipitation and surface cover. B. Melzer told the Council that the subcommittee did consider these forms of data collection.

R. Brown asked the Council if they would allow Richard Dickson to discuss the way the students collect data. The Council agreed to allow R. Dickson to speak.

R. Dickson told the Council that students go into the field and collect original data under controlled conditions on dew point, light, plot and light, soil samples (subject analysis), sand and clay. He told the Council that they are sending students into the field to collect and generate data.

V. Sriraman told the Council that when the subcommittee looked through the lab manual the materials required were colored pencils as opposed to the types of materials required in the Physic courses.

B. Brown told the Council that in the original documentation there is a matrix of the lab course that contains more information. He told the Council that they have a whole room full of instruments and the lab manual was just a beginning point. He told the Council that what they do is beyond the lab. The subcommittee apologized for not looking at the materials in the matrix form.

V. Luizzi told the Council that the subcommittee recommendation was based on the information they had at the time. The subcommittee had also requested more specific information and responses for supporting data.

B. Brown told the Council the matrix was available to them. B. Melzer told the Council that S. Beebe had the graphs, etc.

K. Margerison told the Council that the subcommittee was looking for clarification of a few laws of nature. They went to the text and lab manual, and they went beyond the charge assigned to them to find supporting data. K. Margerison asked B. Brown to give the Council some examples of the laws of nature addressed in the course. B. Brown mentioned the Law of Gravity, the Law of Dynamics (theory not law). He told the Council he would be more comfortable if his colleague spoke on the laws of nature issue.

R. Brown asked the Council if they would allow R. Dickson to speak. The Council agreed to allow him to speak.

R. Dickson told the Council that the physical laws of nature bound Physical Geography. The first component is the radiation from the sun with the earth. He

told the Council the students study the Bowen Ratio, Dean's Law, and the Green House Effect with extra heating. They study how solar radiation is distributed, wind temperature and Newton's Law. The students also study the lands' state. They study mass wasting, gravity, the buoyancy effect and water flow. They also use math equations. R. Dickson told the Council the students study Biogeography. The students study the interaction of humans, animals and plants with the environment and contemplate evolution.

R. Northcutt asked how mathematics was reflected in the lab? What forms of mathematics are used for experimentation, data collection and evaluation?

B. Melzer told the Council that it was rather limited. The level of mathematics would require college algebra.

V. Sriraman told the Council that quite a few laws were mentioned. His concern is are all these laws learned and used in one course? B. Brown told the Council that an introductory course could not do all that.

V. Luizzi told the Council that the subcommittee did not see all the materials that are now said to have been included in the original information materials and the wide range of information taught. The subcommittee made their recommendation on the bases of data/information they had. He asked the Council to accept the subcommittee recommendation or have them reevaluate the courses in light of the new information provided.

R. Brown asked the Council to allow L. Estaville to speak. The Council agrees to allow him to speak. First, L. Estaville told V. Luizzi that the data shows all the details about the laws of nature. Second, the information submitted to the subcommittee was uniformly presented to the GEC. He told the Council that the Geography representatives were not allowed to address the subcommittee in their meeting to be sure they had all the information they needed because it was a closed meeting.

V. Luizzi told the Council the matrix was filled out, but with no laws of nature. The subcommittee thoroughly looked at the information they had. B. Melzer told the Council that it was unfortunate that the subcommittee didn't get all the information, but they asked for the laws of nature and took the information packets they had for the charge discussion. It was a closed meeting. The subcommittee has set the recommendation before the Council to accept or to reject. V. Luizzi told the Council in light of the information presented they could send the charge back to the subcommittee.

R. Brown told the Council that he doesn't suggest the Council proceed in that manner because the Council cannot meet again this semester. He told the Council that the Geography department could bring the proposal back at a later time. The General Education Curriculum could be approved at a later date

because it would not go into effect until 2001. He told the Council they could vote against the subcommittees' recommendation and create a new motion.

M. Brennan told the Council that she mentions basic principles and the laws of nature in her lectures and she assumes the student has a basic knowledge of the information mentioned, but she does not teach the laws of nature.

B. Brown told the Council that they establish laws and how they work in this course.

B. Melzer called the question to a vote.

Council moving to a vote on this motion passed 11 for, 2 opposed.

Motion:

The subcommittee recommends rejecting GEO 2410: Physical Environment as an additional SWT Natural Science Perspective to be included in the SWT General Education Core Curriculum listing at this time.

Motion passes 9 for, 2 opposed, and 2 abstained.

Motion:

The subcommittee recommends rejecting GEO 2310: Environmental Geography as an additional SWT Natural Science Perspective to be included in the SWT General Education Core Curriculum listing.

Support Statement: Following a thorough review of the initial and supplemental materials provided to the subcommittee by the department the subcommittee could not recommend GEO 2310: Environmental Geography as a general education course for the following reasons:

1. there is no mechanism for a student to collect and analyze data, a component of other natural science perspective courses at SWT
2. There is insufficient information about this new course to determine if the course outcome will meet the requirements for the natural science perspective courses at SWT.

Although a similar course is available for a general education course in several other Texas institutions, a review of the requirements of those institutions required a student completing such a course to fulfill a general education requirement to also have completed either a greater number of math credits than required at SWT or mandated the additional science general education course be from biology, chemistry or physics to assure the scientific approach has been studied. These parameters do not currently exist at SWT.

It is anticipated that, once this course has been offered as a course for SWT students, it will be resubmitted for consideration as a general education course.

Discussion:

R. Northcutt told the Council that there is no data on this course. R. Brown told the Council that if the course were approved, it would enter into the catalog in 2001.

Motion passed 9 for rejecting the motion, 3 opposed and 1 abstained.

Motion:

The subcommittee recommends that the procedure for the General Education Council (GEC) to determine applicability of proposed courses to meet the SWT general education requirements be discussed by the GEC at the second meeting of the 2000-2001 academic year.

Support Statement: The subcommittee has developed an initial procedure for determining the applicability of proposed courses as new general education courses. However, the GEC will not have sufficient time to discuss the process or provide input to the subcommittee prior to the completion of the regular meetings scheduled for the 1999-2000 academic year. Although, the subcommittee has been able to spend nearly 4 hours of discussion about the courses being proposed for additional SWT general education courses it has not had sufficient time to articulate all possibilities to present to the GEC.

Currently the subcommittee's suggested process for approval of new general education courses includes:

1. when a proposal has been received, the GEC appoint a subcommittee to review the proposal
 - a. the process for subcommittee appointment will be determined by the GEC
 - b. the subcommittee chair will be appointed by the Dean
 - c. a GEC member who is a member of the department proposing the additional general education course will not be appointed to the subcommittee to prevent any perception of a conflict of interest
2. the subcommittee will develop a form for assessing the course
 - a. the form will utilize both the CB criterion and the SWT "perspective" criterion for which the course is being suggested
 - b. it is the responsibility of the department to provide the supporting information in the format developed by the subcommittee
3. although parliamentary authority states that committee meetings be completed in executive session, it be the subcommittee's option to invite representatives of the department to present additional information during the subcommittee meeting

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion:

The subcommittee recommends that the SWT administration critically assess the impact of resource allocation/reallocation that will result from the approval of additional courses to meet the SWT general education requirements prior to their implementation as a general education requirement.

Support Statement: The subcommittee has discussed the impact that approving additional general education courses will have on the existing general education courses and recommends that the SWT administration closely determine both the positive and negative impacts of adding general education courses to the existing list of courses prior to implementation, as well as monitor those impacts after implementation.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion:

The subcommittee recommends that the GEC consider the following topics for discussion during the 2000-2001 academic year:

1. Should general education requirements be allowed to be used to meet both a general education requirement and the requirements for a chosen major field of study?
2. Should completion of a minimum of one natural science perspective general education course be required to come from biology, chemistry or physics?

Support statement: During subcommittee discussions these philosophical issues emerged and would be appropriate for discussion by the GEC. These issues have not been discussed by the GEC in several years and would provide a philosophical base for consideration of additional courses being proposed as general education course offerings.

Motion passed unanimously.

R. Brown told the Council and L. Estaville that the revised Geography course proposals could be brought to the Council after the 2nd and 4th Mondays of September.

F. Blevens told the Council that B. Melzer and the subcommittee should be commended for their work and they did an excellent job of dealing with policy through this procedure.

B. Melzer told the Council that the subcommittee tried to be as objective as possible throughout the good and bad portions of the process.

V. Sriraman told the Council that as a new member he thought B. Melzer showed excellent leadership and dignity.

T. Mandeville sent out his recommendations for the portfolio instruction and grid forms to the faculty who teach as an attachment, but they did not receive it. The portfolio form instructed the faculty member to fill in the grid and assess what skills were required in their class. He suggested the categories be changed.

M. Brennan suggested it be written on the form to $\sqrt{\quad}$ more than one.

The Council suggested the subcommittee should adapt the forms and bring the modifications to the next meeting, but they were satisfied with the form as it is.

C. Shroeder addressed the Council concerning student-voting beginning in Fall 2000. She thanked the Council for allowing her to serve for the past 4 years. She gave the Council several reasons to allow students to vote:

1) Allow the students to vote on a trial bases

The students that attend regularly should be allowed to vote.

2) This Council is only a recommending body so the students should be heard.

T. Sanchez told the Council that he has had a hard time not raising his hand because it is like not having an opinion. He thinks serving on the subcommittee added value and future students deserve the same experience. He thinks students should be heard by vote because they can always be recalled.

B. Brown asked the Council how the students that serve on the Council are selected. The students are selected through the ASG.

M. Brennan asked if the reason for the students not being allowed to vote goes back to the original PPS?

R. Northcutt told the Council that some of the past issues concerning student voting were as follows:

1) Concern with attendance and responsibility of the students

2) Faculty are elected to serve on the Council by the school and they had a tighter hand on the process in the past

3) It was a new Council and so it had many restrictions

(The Council now has a higher level of objectivity than before.)

B. Melzer told the Council that not allowing the students to vote was treating them unequally.

K. Margerison told the Council that the quorum should not be changed or, if it is, the students should be added to the quorum.

V. Luizzi told the Council he supports the idea of modifying the PPS.

Motion:

R. Northcutt asked the Council to create a committee to review the issue of student voting on the Council and have them provide a recommendation. B. Brown seconds the motion.

Support Statement: K. Margerison suggested that #6, "(non-voting)" be struck from the PPS. B. Melzer seconds. She told the Council that she seems impressed with C. Shroeder and T. Sanchez.

Replace Motion:

The Council should vote on the support statement from the last motion or go back to the original motion.

Replace Motion defeated 7 opposed 6 for.

The original motion will be studied and a committee appointed. The committee will check to see how many other committees on campus allow students to vote.

Motion:

A subcommittee should be appointed to review the issue of student voting and report at the 2nd meeting in September.

Motion passed unanimously.

R. Brown told the Council he would review the roster and contact the Colleges and Departments for replacement members. He mentioned that it is important to have continuity and that it is not always easy to find people to serve on the Council. He wanted the Council to consider continuing to serve. He thinks the Council is doing important work.

Motion:

R. Brown entertained a motion to adjourn. M. Lord so moves.

Meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.